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Kroomen (who it appears are natives of this part of the coast), and on his written requisition a stoker, named Arthur Stacey, to accompany him as volunteers, checking them on the ship's books as lent to the Expedition. On anchoring the second time off the Kongoni mouth, the steel boat which we had been employed in putting together during the previous three days, was hoisted out, but was found to leak so considerably that we had her lifted in again immediately to remedy the defect. The tide did not serve for crossing the bar till the next forenoon, by which time we had reconnoitred the entrance, and had all the boats, including the two cutters, loaded and ready to go in over the bar, in charge of Mr. Berners, the senior lieutenant. They all passed safely in, being directed by myself at the masthead with pre-arranged signals. In the afternoon Mr. Berners returned with the two cutters and the extra crews who had taken the boats in, and reported that Mr. Young having, with unexpected good fortune, met some natives at the point, who agreed to man his boats, required no further assistance from us. On the same evening, 27th July, I started on my return, using a very little steam to gain an offing—wind, swell, and current all setting on shore.

" Commander GORDON."

"To Commodore Henry Caldwell, c.B."

The following paper was read:-

On the Early Portuguese Expeditions to Abyssinia. By Clements R. Markham, Esq., Secretary R.G.S.

THE author stated that as soon as the aspirations of Prince Henry of Portugal had been fulfilled by the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, by Bartholomew Dias, in 1487, King John II. saw the importance of collecting information in the East, with reference to the possibility of turning the rich trade of the Indies into the new channel; and he was also anxious to discover the dominions of the Christian ruler called Prester John, who had been reported by Marco Polo to reign in the far east. Two Portuguese, named Alfonso de Payva, and Pedro de Covilham, were selected for this service. After a long journey through the East, Payva died at Cairo; but Covilham, having heard that a Christian ruler reigned in the mountains of Ethiopia, and having gained no tidings of any other Christian king during all his wanderings, naturally concluded that the Ethiopian potentate was he for whom he had so long sought in vain. So, in pursuance of his instructions, and undeterred by the dangers of the journey, he penetrated into Abyssinia, and presented himself at the court of the Negus, which was then in the Southern Province of Shoa, in the year 1490. He delivered the King of Portugal's letter to Prester John to the Negus Alexander; but he was detained by this prince and his successors, and was never allowed to leave the country. Covilham, as a young man, had distinguished himself both in the war with Spain and in Morocco, and was an officer of capacity and great courage. He married in Abyssinia, obtained great influence at Court, and survived for many years, for he was still living when the Portuguese embassy arrived in 1520.

In 1507, Ebana Denguel ("Virgin's incense"), or David, ascended the throne of Ethiopia, with the title of Wanag Segued ("Precious gem"). He was very young, and his grandmother Helena assumed the regency. Hearing of the great power of the King of Portugal, from Covilham, she sent an Armenian, named Matthew, with a letter from the Negus David to King Manuel, who was well received at Lisbon; and a return embassy was despatched under Duarte Galvano, who died on the voyage. The advisability of opening a communication with Abyssinia was not lost sight of by the Portuguese Viceroy at Goa, and the death of Galvano only delayed the despatch of an embassy.

In April, 1520, the Viceroy led a fleet into the Red Sea to attack the Turks, taking Matthew, the Armenian, with him. He anchored at Massowa, where he saw the Bahar-Nagays, or Abyssinian Governor of the province bordering the sea, and some monks from the convent of Bisan, in the adjacent mountains. The leading members of the embassy were Rodriguez de Lima, a haughty, quick-tempered young officer; Father Francisco Alvarez, a priest, whose quaint narrative is the earliest and not the least interesting account we possess of Abyssinia; and João Bermudez, the Secretary, a bold and intriguing man, who was much mixed up with the subsequent history of the country.

The Portuguese went first to the monastery of Bisan, on the seaward slope of the Taranta Mountains, and crossing that range, arrived at the town of Barua, or Debaroa, on the eastern bank of the River Mareb, which was then the capital of the province ruled over by the Bahar-Nagays, or Lord of the Sea. The route of the embassy seems to have been nearly the same as that by Kiaquor, which Dr. Beke describes as a gradual and easy road, and well After leaving Debaroa, they crossed the Mareb to Axum, and went thence through the district of Angot, by Lalibela, and the Rock of Geshen, to the court of the Negus David, in the province of The embassy was detained for six years in Abyssinia, Fatigar. during which time Father Alvarez had an excellent opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of the country, and of the manners of His narrative was afterwards published at Lisbon, the people. in 1540, and a copy of the original folio edition is in the British Museum. Ramusio gave an Italian version, and a French one was printed at Antwerp, in 1558. The indefatigable Hakluyt obtained an English translation, which is one of the quaintest and most pleasant bits of reading in the 'Pilgrims' of Purchas.

Soon after the departure of the Portuguese, Abyssinia was invaded by armies of Mahommedans from the countries of Adel and Hurrur on the south, and the Negus David was at last obliged to seek refuge in the almost inaccessible mountain of Damo, in Tigre, where he died in 1540,—his son and successor, Claudius, having taken refuge in a fastness of Shoa. In this state of affairs David had resolved to seek aid from the Portuguese; and the better to ensure their support, embraced the Romish faith. The physician, Bermudez, whom he had detained in Abyssinia, was sent first to Rome, and thence to Lisbon, to request military assistance. The King of Portugal did not hesitate, and Bermudez was despatched to Goa, with orders to the Viceroy to send an expedition in aid of the Negus.

In 1541, the Viceroy, Estevan de Gama, entered the Red Sea, and the expeditionary force was landed at Massowa; its command being entrusted to the Viceroy's brother, Cristoforo de Gama, accompanied by Bermudez. It consisted of 450 Portuguese musketeers, and six small field-pieces. Starting for the interior on July 9th, 1541, the little army marched for six days, suffering much from the want of water and the means of carriage, for they had only a few camels and mules which carried the artillery. At many places where the ground was rocky the camels were useless, and the men had to carry the burdens on their own backs. At the end of the seventh day they arrived at so steep a mountain that it took them the whole day to reach the summit. Here they rested for a time, and refreshed themselves with the cool breeze and the delicious springs that descended from the heights. On reaching Debaroa, Cristoforo de Gama united his forces with those of the Bahar-Nagavs, and was joined by the Queen-Mother.

Mohammed Granhe, the terrible Moorish general, was in the province of Tigre, prepared to dispute the advance of the Portuguese with 1000 horse, 5000 foot, 50 Turkish musketeers, and some artillery. De Gama's army consisted of 450 Portuguese and about 12,000 Abyssinians, badly armed with spears and shields; but his own energy and dash at first carried all before him. He took the mountain fortress of Amba Zanet by storm, and during April, 1542, defeated Granhe in two pitched battles. He afterwards crossed the Tacazze and surprised the famous hill-fortress known as the Jews' Amba. But during the winter Granhe received reinforcements, and on August 28th, 1543, he defeated the allied army in a pitched battle. Badly wounded, De Gama was with difficulty prevailed on to accompany the Queen-Mother and the rest in their flight, and lagging behind was captured by the Moors and beheaded. Only

300 out of the 450 Portuguese escaped from this fatal battle. They retreated to the Jews' mountain, where they were joined by the young Negus Claudius, and in February, 1544, gained a brilliant victory over the Mahommedans, in which Granhe himself was shot by a musketeer. The Negus was eventually slain in a battle with the Mohammedans of Adel in March, 1559, and his body-guard of eighteen Portuguese were killed to a man in their gallant attempt to defend him. Yet the Portuguese were treated with the basest ingratitude. They married natives; and Dr. Beke tells us that to this day their descendants are called Francis, at Karaneo and in its vicinity.

The Jesuits who accompanied Bermudez fixed their head-quarters at Fremona, in Tigre, where they erected a church and fortified convent. The mission underwent numerous vicissitudes during many years, until the Jesuits were finally expelled. They made numerous futile attempts to fix the latitude of Fremona with an astrolabe, always being more than thirty miles out in their reckoning. As missionaries, the Portuguese Jesuits were eminently unsuccessful. The people preferred their own traditional form of Christianity, hated innovation, and insisted upon having a Coptic, not a Roman, Abuna. Bermudez eventually left the country, and reached Lisbon after a residence in Abyssinia of more than 30 years. His narrative was published at Lisbon in 1565. There is a copy in the British Museum Library, and an English version is given in the second volume of Purchas' 'Pilgrims.'

In 1604 Father Francisco Paez arrived at Fremona, who was by far the ablest European that has yet resided in Abyssinia. He added to great tact and judgment, and an extraordinary power of influencing the minds of all classes of men among whom he was thrown, an amount of ability which enabled him to succeed in nearly everything he undertook, from turning a stone arch to ruling the heart of a king; and a quickness of apprehension which amounted to genius. Under him the Jesuit mission rose into high favour, and both the Negus and his brother Sella Christos embraced the Romish faith. This gave rise to a rebellion, headed by the Coptic Abuna Peter, who was defeated and killed in a battle fought amongst the mountains of Samen. The rebel cavalry were seized with a panic, could not stop themselves, and 600 men and horses galloped over a precipice and plunged into a frightful abyss. While Paez lived the disputes between the Abuna and the Jesuits were kept within bounds. But the most lasting memorials of his genius are to be found in the ruins of churches, palaces, and bridges erected under his superintendence. He taught the workmen how to cut and lay the stones. It is a proof of the stiff-necked savagery of the Abyssinians, that, with all these models under their very noses, they should still worship in churches and live in huts of which a West-coast negro would be ashamed. The good Father died after a residence of 19 years in the country. He left a narrative of his labours, of which there were many copies in the Jesuit colleges, but unfortunately it is not yet in an accessible form. There is a copy in the British Museum.

Father Alfonso Mendez was sent out by the Pope as the new Patriarch in 1624. He was accompanied by Father Lobo, and landed at Baylur, on the coast inhabited by the Dankâli tribes, approaching the highlands by a route which has only once been traversed by a European (Mr. Coffin) since their time. The Jesuits were finally ordered to leave the country by the Negus Facilidas in 1633.

The Paper will be printed entire in the 'Journal,' vol. xxxviii.

The President, in returning thanks to Mr. Markham for his luminous paper, said they must all wish him success in his geographical mission in connection with the Abyssinian expedition. He must say it gave him the most sincere gratification that Count Lavradio, the representative of the Portuguese nation, was present, and had heard the narrative of the exploits of his countrymen, who had been our precursors in India and in Abyssinia. His Excellency was a descendant of the first Viceroy of India, and it was peculiarly gratifying to him to know that Count Lavradio was founding a Geographical Society in Lisbon upon the plan of our own. He would now call upon Dr. Beke, who more than forty years ago received the Gold Medal of the Society, and who at that period threw more light upon the subject of Abyssinia than any traveller since the time of Bruce.

Dr. Beke bore testimony to the general accuracy of the paper respecting the explorations of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, and, having pointed out the error in all the maps with respect to the route from Hanfila (Amphila) to Senafé, taken by Coffin, explained the route now proposed to be followed by the British troops. They would not land at Massowah, but at Zulla, or Adulis, in Annesley Bay. The ruins of Adulis are to the north of the Hadás; Zulla is to the south of the Hadás. It was the route which he had himself recommended. He visited this place with his wife at the beginning of last year, for the purpose of exploring this entrance into Abyssinia, and he was happy to say that, after every other route had been examined, this had been selected.

The President asked if there was water at all times in the Hadás?

Dr. Beke said, during the dry season the Hadás now has no water in the lower portion of its channel; but down one-half of its course, from its head at Tohónda as far south as Hamhammo, a well-known camping-ground of the caravans, water is met with at certain spots all the year round; and even when at the driest, wells dug in the sandy bed of the river afford a constant and copious supply of that necessary fluid. During the rains in the upper country the floods of the Hadás, and of its tributary the Aligáddi, find their way down to the sea, and often render the river itself impassable. In February, 1866, he found the dry bed of the river between Adulis and Zulla to be 50 or 60 yards broad; and about a mile nearer the sea, they came to wells

sunk in the sandy soil, at which numerous horned cattle were being watered. From Zulla they went five or six miles further inland, and had the natives been well disposed, they would have gone on to Hamhammo, which was not more than 6 miles from their extreme point; but though disappointed in this, they succeeded in finding the road from Zulla to Hamhammo, which, instead of following the circuitous course of the Hadás, goes directly across the country, making the distance of Hamhammo from the sea-coast not more than 16 geographical miles; from the wells near Zulla it is only 13 miles. In the following month of March they went from Massowah into Abyssinia by the caravan road taken by Bruce, Salt, Rüppell, Krapf, and other travellers; and in May they returned to the coast by the same road. In doing so they had to traverse 26 miles of low and barren country between Arkiko and Hamhammo. where no regular supply of water is to be had; and instead of continuing up the bed of the Hadas to its source, they stopped at about 10 miles below Tohonda, and turned up the steep side of the valley by the pass of Shumfaito. It occupied seven days' slow travelling between Arkiko and Halai on the road up, including stoppages, and four days in returning. The actual time they were on their mules' backs was 25 hours going from the sea up into Abyssinia, and 203 hours coming down. Of these intervals, respectively, 5 hours were spent in ascending, and 3½ hours in descending, Shumfaito. At Halai, at an elevation of upwards of 8400 feet, they had reached the table-land of Abyssinia, and yet they were so close to the coast-little more than 20 geographical miles-that they could perceive the sea beyond Arkiko to the north, and hear the firing of cannon at Massowah; while to the south and south-west for hundreds of miles extended the Abyssinian table-land, of which Amba Magdala is a detached spur, at a lower elevation than the table-land itself, approachable by a practicable road through Agame, Enderta, Bora, and Woffla, without crossing any large river, a considerable portion of which road had been trodden by himself.

The President: When you have got the army on the table-land, do you

not see any great difficulty?

Dr. Beke said, not if they kept clear of the rivers, which ran in valleys 3000 and 4000 feet deep. If an army crossed the rivers, they would have to go down one side of the valley, and ascend the other; and it would take them as long to march in that way as it would to go round the heads of the rivers on the table-land. Moreover, if they kept on the table-land, they could drop down upon any part of the country they pleased, between the valleys. The passes at the entry into the table-land were very narrow, and could be defended by a small body of troops; but there were no troops there, and the natives who held the passes could easily be disarmed by a bribe.

In answer to Mr. Crawfurd, Dr. Beke said he had not visited Magdala; he had visited Debra Tabor, which was about 40 days' march from the coast, of 10 miles a day. Magdala was somewhat nearer. An Abyssinian town was a mere collection of huts. Wherever the king made his camp, that became the capital of the country. If he remained there for a considerable time, the people would build a church of wattle and mud, or make it stronger with dry earth and straw. There were no stone houses except those built by the Portuguese. The convents were built of mud walls; of what few manuscripts there

were in the convents, copies had been brought mostly to England.

Sir Henry Rawlinson, M.P., having referred to the various routes which had been followed by different travellers penetrating Abyssinia from the seacoast, said that Colonel Merewether, who had good opportunities of obtaining information, was strongly in favour of entering by Amphila Bay. Dr. Beke, on the other hand, had first pointed out the advantages of Adulis, and for this he deserved great credit, as well as for having made known the physical configuration of Abyssinia. He had indeed rendered great service by drawing attention to the real nature of the so called precipitous passes, showing that

they were merely river-beds. All the rivers came down from the high tableland, and formed themselves into precipitous gullies of greater or less depth. some of them as much as 3000 feet in depth. Any army, therefore, which attempted to march at right angles to the line of the rivers would have to cross a succession of these precipitous gullies, descending 3000 feet on one side to ascend 3000 feet on the other. It was this circumstance which caused the character of the country to be regarded as so difficult in a military point of view. But if the troops kept close along the eastern edges of the tableland, they would get round the head-waters of these rivers, and avoid the difficulty of crossing them, and they could then diverge into the interior at any point they liked, between the rivers, along the shoulders which run down from the crest of the table-land. With regard to the point of entry, he quite agreed with Dr. Beke that Zulla or Adulis was much preferable to Massowah. ancients were very good practical geographers, and they always selected the most favourable point for their settlements. They chose Adulis, because a river there fell into the sea, by which they could pass on to the table-land of Abyssinia. Adulis was a port of great importance in the time of the Ptolemies; and in the fifth century, when the Greek monk Cosmos visited it, he found the throne of a Ptolemy still standing on the sea-shore, with a most important historical inscription engraved on it, which he copied. He did not know whether Dr. Beke had been to the ruins of Adulis.—(Dr. Beke: Yes). Was there any trace to be found of the old throne?—(Dr. Beke: No). Adulis and Axum were the only two places that he had ever heard of where ancient remains were to be found.

Dr. Beke.—There is the Greek town of Senafé.

. Sir Henry Rawlinson said wherever there were any Greek towns it was important to gather whatever relics might still be found there. Such remains were doubtless confined almost entirely to the sea-coast, because it appeared that in the interior of Abyssinia the people had never taken in any way to working in stone. Axum, Senalé, and Adulis belonged to a group of stations adjoining the sea. At one time there was a perfect howl of desperation in the periodical press of this country at the dreadful climate which our troops were going to encounter in Abyssinia. But as far as he could make out, Abyssinia was in reality one of the healthiest countries in the world. At any rate, compared with India, the highlands of Abyssinia were excessively healthy, so much so that he thought it likely that during our occupation of the country some points might be selected as a sanatorium for India. Another reason for selecting Adulis for debarkation was the short distance thence to the fine climate of the highlands. The plan of Sir Robert Napier was understood to be, to establish a depot on the nearest point of the high table-land from Zulla, a distance of 40 or 50 miles, and to concentrate the troops upon the plateau, whence negotiations could be kept up with the surrounding people, and a base of operations established for a further entrance into the country. As far as climatic or physical or military difficulties were concerned, he looked upon them as not very great. The political difficulties were another matter. For instance, if the captives were not forthcoming, the natural question would be, What are we to do? If they were taken away from Magdala, where were we to follow them? These points, and many others, would cause difficulty in the future, but they were points which did not immediately concern the Geographical Society.

Lord Houghton said he thought the Government would be severely questioned as to whether all the advice which they could receive from Abyssinian travellers had been absolutely exhausted; whether Baker, Dr. Beke, and others had been consulted, and their advice taken and acted upon. He trusted that Sir Roderick Murchison, who, as representing the Geographical Society, was a real power in the matter, had been fully consulted. He said now, and he should say it hereafter, that if all the information and intelligence which

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the Geographical Society had at command had not been brought to bear, the Government would have incurred a very grave responsibility. For himself, he was personally interested, having travelled many years ago to Upper Egypt with Mr. Mansfield Parkyns, who went forward and lost himself for five or six years, utterly unknown to European cognisance, in that mysterious country. Had Mr. Mansfield Parkyns been fully consulted, or any of the travellers in connection with the Society, as to whether the release of the prisoners could not be procured by indirect means? 100,000% given for this object would be unimportant in comparison with the cost of an expedition.

The President said, as far as he knew, almost all the persons capable of

giving advice, including Dr. Beke, had been consulted.

Dr. Beke.—I have given information and advice, but have not been consulted.

The President said, at all events, the only suggestion which he ventured to offer during the recess, when he could not call together the Council, was immediately attended to by both the Ministers who have this expedition under their control. They immediately approved of scientific men and travellers being consulted; and they immediately directed the Topographical Department to make researches into all the travels that had ever been made, and to lay down all the different routes. As far as he had the means of judging, no expedition had left our shores in which greater pains had been taken, both on this side of the water and at Bombay, to bring together all the scientific knowledge they could respecting the country to enable the expedition to succeed.

Mr. Danby Seymour, M.P., said his object in rising was simply to answer the question put by his relative Sir Henry Rawlinson, When Sir Robert Napier got into Abyssinia, what was he to do? It was no doubt a difficult question to answer, but he did not think it was one impossible to answer. Supposing the prisoners were kept at Magdala, in that case Sir Robert Napier bad his task clearly cut out before him. He had got to march by the road chosen for the route of the expedition to Magdala; and when once at Magdala there was no doubt about his being able to take the fort and deliver the prisoners, if they were there. We knew that the prisoners themselves wished that this expedition should be sent out, as their only mode of escape. But suppose King Theodore removed the captives from Magdala, the next question was, Where could be go with them? To the south there was the King of Shoa who had offered his assistance to the British Government, and had sent to Bombay to urge the release of the prisoners. Therefore, if King Theodore went towards Shoa, he would probably be hemmed in between two fires, and finding himself in this critical position he would probably release the prisoners. Next, suppose he did not go to Shoa, but took refuge in his native province of Kwara. There was a powerful rebel chief in arms against King Theodore in Godjam, and if the King attempted to get to Kwara he must pass through this danger. But supposing he reached Kwara, nothing would be easier than for our troops to pass through Kwara; and on his being driven from there he must fall into the hands of the Egyptians, who would not be very far from Therefore, when the question was asked, What was Sir Robert Napier to do? the answer was: First of all, he had to release the captives if they were kept in Magdala; if they were taken from Magdala, then, with the assistance of allies offered to the British Government, he had to pursue King Theodore, and it was impossible for him ultimately to escape. Moreover, it should be remembered, that with many other chiefs in arms against him, King Theodore was not the formidable adversary he was, when he was King of all Abyssinia. With regard to the scientific part of the expedition, he hoped it had been constituted in a manner commensurate with the importance of the occasion. To the south of Abyssinia was the country of the Gallas, who were described by Harris and other travellers as a superior and interesting people. It would be a pity if some of the persons attached to the expedition should not be allowed to profit by this excellent opportunity to extend their inquiries into these

most interesting regions.

Sir Henry Rawlinson said there was nothing to prevent King Theodore taking the prisoners from Magdala by Dembea into Kwara, his native province, where he was accustomed to take refuge in times of difficulty. If our troops followed him into Kwara, we might certainly drive him on into the hands of the Egyptians; but it was the special object of the expedition to avoid all complicity with the Egyptians, and that he believed to be the main reason for selecting Zulla instead of Massowah as the point of entry, Massowah having always been garrisoned by Egyptian troops, while Zulla was unoccupied.

The President, in reply to Lord Houghton and Mr. Danby Seymour with respect to the selection of the scientific members, said all he could do was to make a suggestion, and that suggestion was at once adopted by the Government. Although the persons that might have been recommended here might have been very suitable men, he knew that he could not have selected a better geologist than Mr. Blanford, who was to be sent from Bombay; and he ventured to say that we could not have found a more proper man to carry out the geographical explorations than their secretary, Mr. Markham. He had only to add that in the library of the Society there existed a large number of works on Abyssinia, which had been thoroughly well classed by Mr. Lamprey, their librarian, and had been consulted by the Government departments.

Second Meeting, 25th November, 1867.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, BART., K.C.B., PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

ELECTIONS.—William Ferneley Allen, Esq., Lord Mayor of London; G. Andrews, Esq.: Geo, Armitstead, Esq.: the Duke of Buccleuch, K.G., &c.: Sir D. Baxter, Bart.; W. J. Best, Esq.; A. M. Bethune, Esq.; J. F. J. Cuttance, Esq.; G. E. Dalrymple, Esq.; J. Donald, Esq.; J. Edward, Esq.; G. E. Forbes, Esq.; R. M. Kerr, Esq., Judge of the Sheriff's Court: the Right Hon. Lord Kinnaird, K.G.; W. Lawson, Esq.: Col. Lloyd Lindsay, M.P.; John Mackinlay, Esq., C.E., &c.; Duncan McGregor, Esq.; F. M. Metcalfe, Esq.; T. Muir, Jun., Esq.; J. Paterson, Esq.; Col. Sir Arthur Phayre; C. A. Pierce, Esq.; Rev. A. Raleigh, D.D.; A. J. Rhodes, Esq.; E. Spicer, Esq.; Lieut. Steel, R.E.; Lieut. O. B. C. St. John, R.E.; J. G. Taylor, H.B.M. Consul in Kurdistan; J. H. Tritton, Esq.; Capt. F. J. S. Venner; Rev. J. Waite; M. J. Barrington Ward, Esq.; B. Washbourne, Esq., M.D., &c.; Robert Spence Watson, Esq.; M. Woodifield, Esq., M.I.C.E.

ACCESSIONS TO THE LIBRARY FROM NOV. 11TH TO NOV. 25TH .-'Nathaniel Pearce-Life and Adventures of, during a residence in Abyssinia from the year 1810 to 1819.' Mr. Coffin's Account of his Visit to Gondar. 2 vols. 8vo., 1831. Purchased. 'Journal of Mr. Blumhardt to Abyssinia, 1838.' The late Travels of S. Gíacomo Baratti into the remote country of the Abisines, 1690. Purchased.